United Nations

Daily Highlights

Department of Public Information • Central News Section • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/1295
22 December 1992

TUESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Security Council, in Presidential statement, urges UNITA and Angolan Government to agree on "realistic plan" for implementation of Peace Accords; calls on parties to accept Secretary-General's invitation to joint meeting, under his auspices.

+ Secretary-General recommends that Security Council defer decision on planning for transition between present Unified Task Force and new United Nations Operation in Somalia until evaluation has been made of success in establishing secure environment for humanitarian operations.

+ Security Council, in second statement this evening, condemns illegal detention of United Nations Transition Authority in Cambodia personnel by elements of Party of Democratic Kampuchea; calls for action to safeguard security of UNTAC staff.

+ Voter registration period for elections in Cambodia next year extended by one month, to 31 January 1993; spokesman says that will not affect date of elections, still scheduled to take place by end of May.

+ Secretary-General tells Israeli Foreign Minister of his intention to send Under-Secretary-General James O.C. Jonah to area to discuss with Israeli Government mass deportation of Palestinians to Lebanon.

+ Co-Chairmen of Conference on Former Yugoslavia, following elections in Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, say they will continue to talk to "whoever holds positions of power and influence"; to meet on 27 and 28 December with Presidents of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Republic of Yugoslavia.

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Concerned at the lack of progress in implementing the Angola Peace Agreement and at the continuation of the dangerous political and security situation in that country, the Security Council today urged the parties to agree on a "realistic plan" for the implementation of the Accords and to facilitate a continuing United Nations presence in Angola.

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For information media—not an official record

In a statement read out by Council President Chinmaya Rajaninath Gharekhan (India) on its behalf this evening, the Council urged the two parties to "produce early evidence of their willingness and ability" to work together to implement the Agreement, "so that the international community would feel encouraged to continue to commit its scarce resources to the continuation of the United Nations operation in Angola on its present scale".

The Council further urged that the military forces of the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) be immediately withdrawn from Uige and Negage and that the Government administration be fully restored there.

The Council appealed to President dos Santos and UNITA leader Jonas Savimbi to accept the Secretary-General's invitation to attend, under his auspices, a joint meeting to confirm that real progress had been made in the reactivation of the Bicesse Accords.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has recommended that the Security Council defer its decision on the planning of a new United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM) to take over from the United States-led Unified Task Force until it becomes clear whether it has achieved its goal of establishing a secure environment for humanitarian operations.

In his report to the Council, dated 19 December, he says such a transition should await the establishment of a cease-fire, the control of heavy weapons, the disarming of lawless gangs and the creation of a new police force. "Without for one moment suggesting that the Unified Task Force should remain in Somalia until the peace process achieves its goals, I do believe that progress in the peace process must be taken into account in deciding how and when the Force should be replaced by a new UNOSOM", he says.

He goes on to warn that the international community faces a long haul in helping the people of Somalia to put their country on its feet again. "Hasty decisions at the very beginning of this process could have far-reaching and nefarious consequences," he writes. "It would be a tragedy if the premature departure, or remodelling, of the Unified Task Force were to plunge Somalia back into anarchy and starvation and destroy the fragile political progress of recent weeks."

The Secretary-General notes that at the most recent meeting with United States representatives on Friday, 18 December, it became clear that their thinking with regard to a new UNOSOM differed somewhat from that presented in his report. They envisaged the new mandate, level of armament and rules of engagement as "little different" from that of the Unified Task Force itself, he said. Warning that such a concept of "a peace enforcement operation under United Nations command" would have "far-reaching consequences", he also notes it would depend on Member States' readiness to support and finance such an operation.

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The Secretary-General reports that he has decided to convene an informal preparatory meeting for a conference of national reconciliation and unity on Somalia, to be held at the United Nations headquarters in Addis Ababa on 4 January, 1993.
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The Security Council has strongly condemned the illegal detention of United Nations Transition Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) personnel by elements of the Party of Democratic Kampuchea and acts of threat and intimidation against them.

In a Presidential statement issued this evening, it demanded that such actions and any other hostile acts against UNTAC cease immediately, and that all parties take action necessary to safeguard the lives and the security of UNTAC personnel throughout Cambodia.

The Council urged all the parties to abide scrupulously by their obligations under the Paris Agreement to cooperate fully with UNTAC and to respect all the relevant resolutions of the Security Council.

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The voter registration process in preparation for the elections in Cambodia next year has been extended by one month, to 31 January 1993. Announcing the extension at Headquarters today, a United Nations spokesman stressed that it would not affect the date of the elections, which were still scheduled to take place no later than May.

The spokesman said that the original appraisal that 4.5 million people would be eligible to vote appeared to be an underestimate. Already 4.2 million had been registered, and the extension would provide returning refugees with a better chance to sign up. According to a spokesman for the United Nations Transition Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC), about 250,000 will have been repatriated by the end of December, and the extension is expected to benefit another 100,000, some of whom will still be in transit camps.

The registration period, which was to have run from 5 October to 31 December, started late in parts of the country. Some areas, the spokesman said, had not been accessible till recently, and UNTAC wanted to ensure that all qualified voters were given the opportunity to be included in the process.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali, according to his Spokesman, telephoned Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres today, to discuss the subject of the deportation last week of about 400 Palestinians from the occupied territories to southern Lebanon. Mr. Boutros-Ghali informed Mr. Peres of his

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intention to send an envoy, Under-Secretary-General James O.C. Jonah, to discuss the situation with the Israeli Government, in the hope of finding a solution.

The Security Council, in a resolution adopted on Friday evening, asked the Secretary-General to send an envoy to the area to follow up on the serious situation there and to report back to the Council. It also demanded that Israel ensure the safe and immediate return of all the deportees.

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The Co-Chairmen of the International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia, Lord Owen and Cyrus Vance, in a statement issued in Geneva today, said that they looked forward to hearing the final reports of those monitoring the elections in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. They said they had always adopted the course of talking to whoever held positions of power and influence in the former Yugoslavia, and intended to proceed on a persistent path towards a negotiated settlement of the conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

To that end, they said they would be meeting with President Izetbegovic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, President Tudjman of Croatia and President Cosic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia on Sunday and Monday, 27 and 28 December, in Geneva, to prepare for talks to be held on 2 January with the representatives from the three countries.

The focus of those talks, they said, would be a sustainable cessation of hostilities in Bosnia and Herzegovina; the demilitarization of Sarajevo; an agreement on a pull-back of forces that supports the direction of the overall political settlement and the free movement of citizens from beseiged towns and cities and the free movement of humanitarian aid.

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